

To Do or Not To Do: An Ethical Dilemma

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‘No morality can be founded on authority, even if the authority were divine’. This quote by A.J. Ayer exemplifies the type of change needed to ensure an ethical environment in the company. I believe that my experiences from working in the food industry for the past year have proven that it is not enough for the supervisors to threaten unethical behavior with punishment; the employees themselves must learn to act ethically. I think that one-on-one meetings with employees and incentives for employees to make ethical decisions are two ways to promote ethical behavior within the company.

The first thing the company must do is to ask employees what company policies make it difficult for them to make ethical decisions. Each supervisor should have a meeting with their employees in which they show them the company code of ethics and ask which company policies makes it difficult for the employees to make ethical decisions. Perhaps they are not given enough time to do certain tasks, and therefore do not have time put on wear gloves. These meetings would ensure that complaints are addressed. Fixing these complaints would show the employees that the company is willing to compromise with them to make ethical decisions easier, and this would make the employees more willing to make ethical decisions.

The second thing that I believe would help promote ethical decision making is to have a system of incentives for employees that make ethical decisions. Several times a day the supervisor should look and take note of employees who are following company policies, such as wearing gloves and hairnets. Employees that consistently do this should be allowed to participate in a raffle to win prizes every month. Also, if all the employees follow the company policies they would be eligible for a catered dinner at the end of the

month. This would help promote interdependence within the company as all the employees would be working towards the same goal. I believe that offering these kinds of incentives at my job would encourage all the employees to work harder to follow company policy and make ethical decisions. Perhaps if they were offered participation in a raffle the employees would think twice about handling food without gloves. These incentives would help promote good values in the employees. At first the employees would only be making ethical decisions for the incentives, but in time they will get used to making the correct decisions without the need for incentives. Thus positive beliefs would be created in the company.

From my experiences in the food industry I have learned that for people to make good decisions they need to be shown that the company cares about them, and they need incentives. This is why I believe the one-on-one meetings and the prizes are a good way to promote ethical decision making. Both of these will help the employees make ethical decisions not because of punishment but because they want to. This is, after all, the key to an ethical business.